

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A flexible data outlet includes a housing configured for placement in an operating area of a user, such as on a wall adjacent to a user's work space. User interface circuitry in the 5 housing provides an interface to user equipment located in the user operating area, including a user telephone device and a user data device such as a personal computer. The user interface circuitry includes a link-layer interface to the user data device. Both wired and wireless user connections are supported. Premises 10 interface circuitry in the housing provides an interface to premises equipment located generally outside the user operating area. The premises equipment includes data processing equipment and telephone communications equipment providing access to a public telephone network. Bridge circuitry in the housing provides communications connections between the user interface circuitry and the premises interface circuitry in a flexible manner, enabling the provision of a variety of information services to the user. An optional management processor can provide diagnostic and other information to the user via hypertext 15 pages. The data outlet is packaged in a housing similar to the housing used for a standard telephone wall jack, and is connected to telephone wiring or other available wiring.

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